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DE RUEHKO #1150/01 1402211
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 202211Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3093
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY 0631
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 5369
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9351
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 4081
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 1698
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 6413
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 7883
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 4612
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 3532
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 5135
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC 8632
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY IA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMFIUU/USFJ

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 001150

DEPT FOR OES/IHB AMBASSADOR LOFTIS
DEPT FOR EAP/J, EAP/EX, CA
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS FOR BURDETT
HHS PASS TO CDC
HHS FOR OGHA
DEPT PASS TO AID/GH/HIDN

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [AESC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KSAF](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#)

AMGT, MG, EAGR, JA

SUBJECT: MGSF01 UPDATE ON H1N1 OUTBREAK IN JAPAN

REF: TOKYO 1125 and previous

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Sensitive but Unclassified. Please handle accordingly.

1. (SBU) Summary: Japan has reported as many as 236 confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza. Nearly all cases were reported to be in the Osaka and Kobe areas. There are no reports of H1N1 infection among Americans in Japan. While the majority of confirmed cases involve students and young adults, the virus has also been reported in other age groups. Most schools in Osaka and Hyogo prefectures will remain closed through the week of May 18. Schools have also been closed in Shiga and Nara prefectures. Japanese government officials said the GOJ will begin to scale back airport health screening procedures, but have not announced when the change will take effect. Since the start of the H1N1 outbreak, Japan's tourism industry has seen a sharp rise in travel cancellations, particularly among school groups. The Mission continues to work closely with U.S. Forces Japan, the Japanese Government, and other entities to monitor the spread of H1N1 in Japan, coordinate responses, and inform Americans in Japan of H1N1-related developments. End Summary.

2. (U) As of May 20, 2009 1600 local time, media report 236 confirmed human cases of the novel Type A H1N1 influenza in Japan. No H1N1 influenza deaths have been reported. There are no reports of H1N1 infection among Americans in Japan.

3. (SBU) Hyogo and Osaka prefectures reported several new H1N1 flu cases May 20. The two prefectures accounted for nearly all of Japan's confirmed H1N1 cases. Nearby Shiga prefecture confirmed the H1N1 virus in a university student who officials determined visited Kobe May 15-18. Media report Shiga prefecture closed all secondary

schools in the prefecture, as well as elementary schools in six cities until May 26. Although students and young adults comprise the majority of Japan's confirmed H1N1 cases, Hyogo and Osaka prefectures also reported H1N1 infections in other age groups. Nearly all schools in Osaka and Hyogo prefectures will remain closed through the week of May 18. Neighboring Nara prefecture has also closed a number of schools as a precautionary measure.

14. (SBU) Japanese government officials told the press May 19 the GOJ will begin to scale down airport health screening procedures as early as the end of the week of May 18 in order to shift resources to handling the domestic outbreak. Health Ministry officials said a GOJ interagency task force will decide on the timing and extent of any change in border procedures. Although media report the GOJ will no longer isolate arriving passengers who are determined to have been seated near an infected passenger, Health Ministry officials told embassies the GOJ has not made an official decision. Narita Airport officials said they have received no official GOJ guidance to change current border screening procedures. Airline representatives said they would welcome the termination of border measures that currently require quarantine officers to board all arriving flights from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Officials from U.S. airlines said the current screening procedures have resulted in delays of an average of 45 minutes for disembarking passengers and ripple effects for operations such as baggage handling and aircraft cleaning. Airlines have not requested any Embassy assistance at this time.

15. (SBU) Local economists and business leaders have told officers at Consulates General that Japan's tourism industry has experienced a steep rise in cancellations due to the H1N1 outbreak. Tourism industry representatives in Hyogo prefecture said the popular Arima hot springs area is experiencing its worst downturn since the 1995

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Kobe earthquake. There are reports schools throughout Japan have cancelled group trips, both to destinations within Japan and abroad.

16. (SBU) Members of the Embassy's Emergency Action Committee met via teleconference May 20 with officers from the Mission's five Consulates General and U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) to coordinate current actions and consider further steps to prepare for the spread of H1N1 in Japan. Embassy offices and Consulates General are disseminating H1N1-related information to official and non-official Americans in Japan in accordance with Washington guidance and the "no-double standard" policy. In coordination with the GOJ, airport authorities, airlines, and USFJ, Mission offices are closely monitoring GOJ border screening procedures and will report any changes to GOJ policy.

ZUMWALT